

ARTICLE 305 NORTH SECTOR POLICIES

NORTH SECTOR LOCATION AND EXTENT

The North Sector of Detroit is bounded by Woodward on the west, Eight Mile Road on the north, Mt. Elliott on the east, and on the south by the cities of Hamtramck and Highland Park, and the Grand Trunk Western Railroad lines.

In addition to the cities of Hamtramck and Highland Park, the North Sector borders the cities of Ferndale, Hazel Park, and Warren. Altogether, the North Sector is approximately 10.5 square miles, or 7.5 percent of the total land area of the City of Detroit.

In terms of income, employment, age distribution and household composition, the North Sector is very similar to the City as a whole. However, it has the largest proportion of foreign-born residents of all of the Detroit planning sectors.

NORTH SECTOR PLANNING ISSUES AND FUTURE POTENTIALS

The elements most greatly affecting the future of the North Sector are its industrial facilities, its neighborhood systems, and -- directly tied to neighborhoods -- its housing stock. The Sector's greatest potential lies in the maximization of these three resources.

Industrial areas of the North Sector appear to have excellent potential for continued employment opportunities, for expansion of select areas, and for continued support of the economic base of the City, given the Sector's attributes of location.

Central to the future of the North Sector is its neighborhood systems. The North Sector has many healthy neighborhoods on which to expand; it has just as many neighborhoods with the potential to become just as healthy as any of the best neighborhoods of the Detroit metropolitan area.

The North Sector is a major trucking center, second in importance only to the Southwest Sector (among Detroit's 11 planning sectors). Rail transportation, however, is of less importance to the North Sector, for rail lines mainly serve through traffic. The Sector is not heavily industrialized; there are very few active rail sidings here, and no rail classification yards (areas used for switching and freight trains linking up) or terminals remaining active.

The construction of the planned Light Rail Transit (LRT) system along Woodward will have an important impact on the North Sector. The regional transportation plan calls for the development of a LRT system in the Woodward Corridor from downtown Detroit to the northern suburbs.

❑ **POLICY 305-1: *North Sector Land Use***

- Maximize the economic development potential for the near future at the State Exposition and Fairgrounds, major intersections along Woodward Avenue, and industrial areas.
- Develop intense residential-commercial uses at major intersections along Woodward related to future light rail transit station development.

❑ **POLICY 305-2: *North Sector Residential Development***

Encourage the continuation of low-density single-family areas while encouraging the development of moderate-density housing along under-utilized major and secondary thoroughfares and the development of high-density housing near future light rail transit stops.

❑ **POLICY 305-3: *North Sector - Commercial Development***

- Consolidate commercial strips and incorporate medium-high density residential uses.
- For most commercial strips, lower intensity of use from General Business to Local Business or to a residential zone.
- Establish appropriate commercial uses along Woodward, Eight Mile Road, and the Chrysler Freeway entry points to take advantage of heavy automobile traffic.
- Improve both the appearance and function of the commercial areas.

❑ **POLICY 305-4: *North Sector - Transportation System***

Develop the Woodward Avenue light rail transit system.

❑ **POLICY 305-5: *North Sector - Recreation System***

Build a new indoor/outdoor community recreation facility west of Ryan.

STATE FAIR SUBSECTOR BOUNDARIES AND FEATURES

A largely residential area bounded by East Eight Mile, Grand Trunk Western Railroad, Highland Park city boundary, and Woodward Avenue. A major land use of this unit is the Michigan Exposition and Fairgrounds.

SUMMARY OF PLANNING ISSUES, STATE FAIR SUBSECTOR

In general, the overall condition of State Fair's housing areas is fair to good. As in many other areas of the City, however, there is a need for a full range of measures to halt deterioration, including the clearance of obsolete structures, encouragement of reinvestment, disposal of vacant lots, and rehabilitation of the housing stock.

The potential of a future Woodward Avenue transit corridor is particularly important to this subsector and could stimulate a great deal of new development, especially in conjunction with possible new uses of the State Fairgrounds, such as for a year-round regional conference center.

There is much healthy commercial development in this area but, as in many other areas, there appears to be an over-abundance of commercially zoned land, and there is a lack of organization: convenience and general commercial as well as light industrial uses are mixed together in no apparent order.

Industrial areas are basically viable, but there are problems relating to land-use conflicts between industrial and residential areas. In some cases, expansion of industry into obsolete residential areas is appropriate; in others, better buffering between the two uses is necessary.

There is a need for more and better recreation facilities in the area.

Finally, the concentration of Arab-Chaldeans in the Seven Mile-John R area affords an opportunity for a special ethnic village type of development, similar to that in Greektown. The Seven Mile commercial frontage already has a very strong ethnic character and could be developed further with the interest and involvement of the local business community.

Of special note is the area east of John R which, based on the level of complaints, suffers from several environmental problems often linked to quality of health.

STATE FAIR SUBSECTOR GOALS

This area has great potential. The State Fairgrounds should become an increasingly important regional center on a year-round basis, bringing a major influx of cultural and economic activity into the area. The neighborhood housing, with proper care and attention, should become more desirable as improvements are made and new economic activity materializes. The commercial areas, once they become better organized and upgraded, can provide convenience shopping as well as general commercial services of a more regional nature. Finally, as the success of Greektown and other ethnic enclaves has demonstrated, there is vast potential for a thriving ethnic community here which can bring new vitality to the entire subsector.

❑ POLICY 305-6: *State Fair Subsector Policies*

- Implement a variety of housing strategies throughout the area including spot demolition and the offering of vacant lots to adjacent homeowners as well as the full range of rehabilitation measures.
- Work with community groups to clean up and maintain vacant lots until an appropriate permanent use is determined.
- Encourage private reinvestment programs similar to Neighborhood Housing Services and decreased mortgage interest programs in the area bounded by Woodward, Seven Mile, John R, and McNichols.
- In the area east of John R, concentrate spot demolition of vacant structures along with a vacant lot clean-up campaign; encourage new housing construction in this area while also considering potential land acquisition for a neighborhood-oriented park.
- Encourage the implementation of both the light rail and the Michigan State Exposition and Fairground Master Plan. In conjunction with these plans, encourage intense mixed use development near proposed transit stations.
- Implement programs to provide better organization and esthetic improvements on commercial strips so that convenience shopping is clustered into mutually

reinforcing nodes and general commercial and light industrial uses are not in conflict with neighborhood-oriented activities.

- Encourage the continuation and, where feasible, the expansion of the industrial uses within the State Fair subsector.
- Insure that new industry is environmentally compatible with surrounding development, and provide better physical definition between industrial and residential areas.
- Where residential uses are adjacent to industrial uses, encourage the development of landscape screens and/or other appropriate buffering.
- Encourage industrial expansion in blocks which are clearly dominated by vacant and unkempt lots, vacant and dilapidated structures, and where industrial encroachment is already apparent.
- To ease this transition, first encourage and assist the few remaining families to move into better housing within this same subsector, employing an area vacant housing rehabilitation and occupancy program. Prior to such action, obtain a firm commitment from the private sector for industrial expansion.
- Increase nearby neighborhood playground space for children. Consider expansion of existing school playground sites and encouragement of access to part of the State Fairgrounds for neighborhood use.
- Encourage the development of a bicycle route via Outer Drive East and West, State Fair, Palmer Park, and West Seven Mile.
- Work with the Chaldean community to explore the potential of development of a strengthened and more tourist oriented ethnic district along the Seven Mile commercial frontage.

NOLAN SUBSECTOR BOUNDARIES AND FEATURES

The Nolan Subsector is a predominantly residential area bounded by Eight Mile, Conant, McNichols, the Chrysler Freeway to Seven Mile, and the Grand Trunk Western Railroad to Eight Mile.

This area and its population appear to be relatively stable; poverty levels are about the same here as for the City as a whole.

SUMMARY OF PLANNING ISSUES, NOLAN SUBSECTOR

In essence, the residential areas of this subsector appear healthy but are not without signs of need for repair; deterioration is evident in the oldest, frame structure areas, but the overwhelming majority of the stock is either sound or clearly rehabilitable. The communities' efforts to upkeep their homes and grounds is evident, yet many of the structures are aged and thus their need for major structural repairs is beginning to outpace the resident's ability to make such repairs along with routine maintenance.

The environmental conditions of this subsector are also very good. With rare exception, neighborhoods are clean, well-maintained, and quiet. Since few obnoxious uses are present in the subsector, very few conflicts between uses exist. With the exception of the area around Jerome and McNichols, infringement of industrial uses into residential areas is non-existent.

There are problems of poor organization and some deterioration of commercial uses.

NOLAN SUBSECTOR GOALS

This subsector is relatively in good condition now, and with the implementation of the following policies, the area should become an increasingly stable and desirable residential community.

❑ **POLICY 305-7: *Nolan Subsector Policies***

- Implement a full range of housing rehabilitation measures where needed, including rehabilitation of low- and moderate-income housing through community group activities, vacant housing rehabilitation and occupancy, and the encouragement of cooperative private reinvestment. Concentrate these efforts in the older areas such as near the railroad and the freeway, but also utilize all measures to prevent blight in the stronger areas.
- Reorganize commercial strips: demolish obsolete structures, provide off-street parking, where needed encourage facade improvements and sign control, and establish Seven Mile and Conant as the two primary concentration of local commercial activity, encouraging residential use in the other strips (except McNichols).

- Retain Eight Mile as a general commercial strip. Continue the development of McNichols as a light industrial and business services area.
- Resolve the recreational inadequacies of this subsector as opportunities arise; expand selected existing recreational facilities when feasible. Acquire land for development of a community-sized playfield and a number of component playfields as opportunity permits.
- Encourage industrial uses within Nolan to remain, but continue expansion of existing industrial acreage only to the area between Jerome and McNichols.
- Encourage amenable and intensive industries to locate in this triangle.

PERSHING SUBSECTOR BOUNDARIES AND FEATURES

The Pershing Subsector is a predominantly single-family residential area bounded by Eight Mile, Mt. Elliott, Nevada, and Conant. It is quite stable and family-oriented, with income levels well above City averages.

SUMMARY OF PLANNING ISSUES, PERSHING SUBSECTOR

Although this is a family-oriented community, there is a need to address the general increase in one- and two-person households by providing smaller dwelling units in multi-family structures.

The problems of lack of organization and overabundance of commercial strip frontage exist to some extent here, as does the need for a better interface between industry and adjacent residential or local commercial uses.

PERSHING SUBSECTOR GOALS

The Pershing Subsector is one of the more affluent and desirable neighborhoods in Detroit. The fundamental goal is to preserve and enhance the area as a family-oriented residential community with sound, well-maintained housing, attractive, convenient shopping, and protection from blight, crime, and the effects of land-use conflicts, through the implementation of the following policies.

❑ POLICY 305-8: *Pershing Subsector Policies*

- Diversify the present housing stock to address the housing needs of the smaller one- and two-person households through the development of

apartments and townhouses and other forms of multi-family structures. Encourage a variety of ownership types, including condominiums and cooperatives.

- To prevent altering the basic single-family home ownership character of this subsector, to avoid disruption of existing neighborhoods, and to meet the transportation needs of such higher density housing, limit this new multi-unit development to areas along under-utilized major and secondary thoroughfares, especially Nevada, Seven Mile, and Conant. Provide physical esthetic improvements along these frontages to create desirable environments for multi-family housing.
- Maintain a consistently high level of quality in housing through code enforcement, structural rehabilitation programs, community organization, and cooperative programs among community and business groups and local financial institutions.
- Continue to provide maintenance and needed improvements to the Sojourner Truth project.
- Concentrate programs specifically designed to encourage rehabilitation and occupancy of vacant housing, such as the Nuisance Abatement Program, in the area south of Outer Drive.
- Remove obsolete commercial structures.
- Off-street parking means should be investigated and implemented where feasible and encourage facade improvements.
- Encourage new residential and local commercial on both Conant and Seven Mile.
- Retain Eight Mile in general commercial uses.
- Encourage industrial uses within Pershing Subsector to remain. Recognizing present land use activities, structures, lot depth, and accessibility, retain the industrial uses in the Mt. Elliott corridor. Consider reuse of vacant parcels and buildings for high technology, robotics, or similar industries.
- Give special consideration to the treatment of industrial land which faces or is adjacent to residential or commercial uses. Encourage such areas to be used

as visitor entrance areas, for the executive offices or other administrative functions rather than for the industrial functions.

- Develop a full-service recreation center including a gym and pool at either Farwell Park or Krainz Park. In addition, promote improvements to Farwell, including permanent bleachers and support buildings.
- Expand Krainz Park as opportunity permits. Encourage a park-type setting at Farwell Playfield.

DAVISON SUBSECTOR BOUNDARIES AND FEATURES

The Davison Subsector is bounded by Hamtramck and Highland Park on the south and west, Mt. Elliott on the east, and on the north by McNichols from Conant west, and Nevada from Conant east. Land uses are primarily residential with a significant amount of industrial. This subsector is relatively less affluent than other subsectors in the area with older housing and greater need generally for remedial action.

SUMMARY OF PLANNING ISSUES, DAVISON SUBSECTOR

Sixty percent of Davison's general residential structures (structures of eight or less housing units) are over 55 years old. With close to 90 percent of its stock built over a 20-year period, Davison's stock lacks sufficient age diversification to allow phasing of major repairs and replacement for normal attrition.

In many of the housing areas, deterioration has already set in to the point of requiring substantial rehabilitation.

Because Davison is centrally located in the region and is bounded and traversed by two freeways, two rail lines, and six major thoroughfares, it is well-suited for uses requiring centrality and high accessibility such as distributing and manufacturing.

Thus, economic development potential for this subsector is largely in industrial intensification and expansion.

The construction of a State prison complex on the site adjacent to the Detroit Terminal rail yard should bolster economic development in the area.

Expansion and intensification potential exists for the McNichols-Dequindre area. Its present uses are low intensity (both in labor and capital), and vacant and under-utilized land is present both within the industrial area itself as well as between the Chrysler Freeway and the Highland Park water reservoir.

Davison's residential areas, as previously indicated, are in a variety of conditions. Most need rejuvenation either through rehabilitation or reconstruction. Only one area, the area south of Jayne Playfield, does not appear to need public assistance to remain healthy. This area, though, should be watched for signs of deterioration as a large proportion of the structures are 60 years old or older. In addition, many problems may exist without any readily visible indications from the outside.

Commercial support service for Davison is considered inadequate. While having substantial commercial acreage zoned, the subsector lacks a local convenience shopping district. While Conant and Seven Mile commercial frontage serve the other subsectors in this capacity, no equivalent strip is located in Davison. Consideration should be given either to downgrading a few contiguous block faces to local commercial, or to the development of a small local convenience shopping district or node.

Land use conflicts exist in a number of places. Examples of such places include the area between residential areas and the freeways; between industrial areas; and, possibly, between the reservoir and residential areas.

Improvements in recreational facilities are needed, both in terms of additional land and facilities improvements.

DAVISON SUBSECTOR GOALS

Although the Davison Subsector has some severe problems in terms of deterioration, lack of maintenance and poor land use organization, the future potential for revitalization is good. By reinforcing the strength of the industrial areas and allowing some expansion where needed into certain obsolete residential areas, a solid economic base can be established, providing well-paying jobs for area residents. Increased income, combined with the implementation of the following policies, should insure the future of this community as a desirable neighborhood with sound housing close to places of employment.

□ **POLICY 305-9: *Davison Subsector Policies***

- Give special consideration to the treatment of industrial land which faces or is adjacent to residential or local commercial uses. Encourage such areas to be used as visitor entrance areas, executive business offices or other administrative functions, rather than for industrial functions. Provide landscape buffer screening where needed.
- Consider expansion of industrial uses into residential areas where additional industrial land is needed, especially in areas where industrial encroachment is already occurring, where there is already a mix of residential and industrial uses, or where isolated small pockets of housing are surrounded by non-residential uses. Insure that there is no truck traffic, odors, noise, dust, unsightly views, or other environmental impacts from such industrial expansion within remaining residential areas.
- Focus neighborhood cooperative reinvestment programs, involving the community and local financial institutions, in the area south of Jayne Playfield.
- Throughout the Davison Subsector, employ code enforcement programs in conjunction with grant and loan programs.
- Use spot demolition to remove obsolete structures.
- Encourage the formation of 40- and 45-foot wide lots by selling half-lots to adjacent property owners. In conjunction with this, encourage property owners to build garages and pave side drives to alleviate on-street parking congestion.
- Provide the Davison Subsector with well-planned convenience shopping through the creation of a small convenience shopping district or node.
- Consolidate general commercial uses toward major intersections, and rezone excess commercial land.
- Encourage such commercial frontage improvements as provision of off-street parking, better maintenance and landscaping, sign controls, and facade improvements.

- Provide improved recreation facilities through acquisition of adjacent land, where needed, and through implementation of planned improvements to the Lasky Recreation Center, including barrier-free access and improved maintenance.
- Insure that the construction of the new prison facility will have no adverse effects on the surrounding community.